

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EUR-25 IO-12 PM-09 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 USIA-12 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9846

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 5919

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : PINS PINT MILI VS

SUBJECT: WEEKLY MR 3 SITREP- APRIL 1-7, 1973

FOLLOWING RECEIVED FROM AMCONSUL BIEN HOA BEING REPEATED

QUOTE

BIEN HOA 0060

SUBJECT: WEEKLY MR3 SITREP- APRIL 1 - 7 1973

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT MILI VS

1. DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF APRIL, MILITARY ACTIVITY TENDED TO DOMINATE THE MR3 SCENE. NVA/ VC MILITARY PRESSURE CONTINUED ON THE ARVN RANGER BASE CAMP AT TONG LE CHAM, AND INCREASED IN PHUOC LONG PROVINCE, WHERE THE PROVINCE CHIEF EXPECTS AN ATTACK ON PHUOC BINH AND SONG BE TOWNS APRIL 10 - 15 BY A DIVISION- EQUIVALENT FORCE WITH TANKS AND LONG- RANGE ARTILLERY. III CORPS CG, LTG NGUYEN VANMINH, THOUGH NOT ENTIRELY IN ACCORD WITH THE PROVINCE CHIEF'S ASSESSMENT OF THE THREAT, HAS DEPLOYED A RANGER BATTALION FROM BINH DUONG PROVINCE TO PHUOC LONG PROVINCE TO REINFORCE INDIGENOUS FORCES BECAUSE HE VIEWS THE SITUATION AS POTENTIALLY EXPLOSIVE. THE RANGERS AT TONG LE CHAM CONTINUE TO HOLD, AND MINH CONTINUES TO PRESS FOR AN ICCS INVESTIGATION TO RESTORE NORMALCY. THE ICCS INVESTIGATION, HOWEVER, REMAINS STALLED IN SAIGON, AND THERE IS STILL NO PRG

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DELEGATION TO THR TRUCE REGION V TPJMC. IN TAY NINH PROVINCE, LARGE MOVEMENTS OF ROCKETS AND OTHER AMMUNITION IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF THE BLACK VIRGIN MOUNTAIN HAVE STIMULATED RVNAF RESPONSE, MOSTLY ARTILLERY AND SPOILING OPERATIONS. AS THE FIGHTING DRAGS ON IN THAT PROVINCE, THE GRVN SEEMS MORE AND MORE PREPARED TO RESPOND FORCEFULLY TO NVA/ VC PROVOCATION, PARIS AGREEMENT OR NO PARIS AGREEMENT.

2. ELSEWHERE IN MR 3, NVA/ VC ACTIVITY WAS AT A LOW LEVEL, CONSISTING MOSTLY OF LIGHT HARASSING ATTACKS BY FIRE AND LIGHT GROUND PROBES. IT WAS FAIRLY QUIET ALL WEEK ALONG INTERPROVINCIAL HIGHWAY 2 IN LONG KHANH AND PHUOC TUY PROVINCES, BUT THE BELLIGERENTS REMAIN WITHIN STRIKING DISTANCE OF EACH OTHER, AND FURTHER GFIGHTING IS EXPECTED THERE THIS MONTH.

3. THE ICCS SUB- REGIONAL TEAM FINALLY MOVED INTO AN LOC ON APRIL 5. RESUPPLY WILL BE A PROBLEM AS LONG AS NATIONAL HIGHWAY 13 REMAINS CLOSED, HOWEVER, SINCE NEITHER THE RVN NOR THE PRG ARE PRESENTLY INCLINED TO REACH AGREEMENT TO OPEN IT TO TRAFFIC. THE CANADIANS ON THE TRUCE REGION V ICCS REAM HOPE TO GET THE ENTIRE AN LOC ICCS ELEMENT TO VISIT PHUOC LONG PROVINCE BEFORE MAJOR FIGHTING BREAKS OUT THERE. THE RVN HAS REQUESTED INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED COMMUNIST CEASE- FIRE VIOLATIONS IN THAT PROVINCE, AND OBVIOUSLY WOULD USE THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT TO GET ITS POINT ACROSS. ELSEWHERE ON THE ICCS FRONG, THE CANADIANS HOPE THAT THE ICCS POINT- OF- ENTRY TEAMS FOR XA MAT AND THE BIEN HOA AIRFIELD WILL FINALLY MOVE INTO THOSE LOCATIONS BY APRIL 14-15, AND, BY DESIGN, THE CANADIANS ARE EMPLOYING MORE AGGRESSIVE TACTICS TO TRY TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS. THE POLES AND HUNGARIANS REMAIN OBSTRUCTIVE, HOWEVER.

4. ON THE POLITICAL SIDE, MOST GRVN OFFICIALS FROM THE PROVINCE CHIEFS ON DOWN ARE NOW PREPARING FOR THE VILLAGE COUNCIL ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR MAY AND JUNE IN MR 3. THE THREE POLITICAL PARTIES LEFT IN THE RVN (DEMOCRACY PARTY, FREEDOM PARTY, SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE) ARE ALSO PREPARING THEMSELVES FOR THE VILLAGE ELECTIONS. PRESIDENT THIEU' S DEMOCRACY PARTY CURRENTLY HAS A HUGH HEAD START ON THE OTHET TWO PARTIES. MOST INFORMED OBSERVERS OF THIS REGION' S POLITICAL SCENE EXPECT THE DEMOCRACY PARTY TO DOMINATE THE RESULTS.

5. INITIAL OFFICIAL VIETNAMESE REACTION TO THE JOINT US- RVN COMMUNIQUE IS FAVORABLE. GRVN OFFICIALS ESPECIALLY WELCOME THE WORDS "... ACTIONS WHICH WOULD THREATEN THE BASIS OF THE AGREE-
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MENT WOULD CALL FOR APPROPRIATE VIGOROUS ACTION." THERE IS ALSO
RELIEF OVER THE EXPRESSED US COMMITMENT TO CONTINUE MILITARY AND
ECONOMIC SUPPORT OF THE RVN. WILKINSHAW UNQUOTE
WHITEHOUSE

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